

THE
COPIE OF
THE
LETTER,

Sent from the Commissioners of the G. A.
to all the Presbyteries, shewing what course is
to be taken by them, and every Kirk Session and Family,
for turning away the LORDS wrath from the Land.

Reverend and beloved Brethren.



Being frequently convinced heer, by advice and
desire of the honourable Estats of Parliament, and
being also by them excited to make an accurat search
of the sins of the land, provoking the Lord to just
indignation against us, we did exhibite to them
a new and necessarte warning, bri:fly containing
the causes of our judgement, and the conceived remedies thereof;
Which for some reasons is thought fit not to be printed at this
time: onlt we signifie this unto you, that in the end thereof
we exhorted the severall Estates among themselves to make a
strait inquisition of the sins most incident to themselves, that they
might provoke one another to repentance, and zeal toward God,
and his Cause; and so make better use of this, then of our former
warnings,

wantings, who accordingly did set apart a time for that effect,
 and went about it: and we who did exhort others, thought it in-
 cumbent to our selves, seriously to search and humble and sadlie
 to acknowledge the faults of our persons and callings, such as
 were known to be too rise amongst us of the Ministerie: which
 was in a solempne way performed by us in one of our meetings,
 one by one: as the L O R D. touched every mans heart, and opened
 his mouth: out of which speeches the inclosed catalogue of sins,
 and remedies thereof was extracted, and the same we thought
 good to transmit unto you, that you making use thereof and re-
 flecting your thoughts upon your selves may Presbyterially fol-
 low the same course, and give order that the samme be done in
 your severall Sessions: Desiring withall, that in each Congrega-
 tion, in a solempne humilisation, there may be a confession and be-
 wailing of sinne, and a pressing of each families privation to re-
 forme the same: That so all Scotland may lament after the Lord;
 that his fierce wrath may depart from us. So hoping you will
 not be deficient herein in so necessarie a time, Wee commit you
 and your labours to the blessing of GOD, and rests,

Perth, Aug. 5.

1645.

Your loving Brethren, the
 Commissioners of the
 Generall Assemblie.

M. WILLIAM BENNET
 MODERATOR.

This our letter, together with the inclosed Articles,
 we require to be registrate in your Presby-
 terie Bookes, for our exoneration.

Enormities

**Enormities and corruptions observed to be
in the Ministerie, with the remedies thereof,**

recommended to the severall Presbyteries, by the
Commissioners of the Generall Assemblie, met at
Perth, in the beginning of August, 1645.



HE first and main sin, reaching both to our
personall carriage and callings, we judge to
be, Not studying how to keep Communion
and Fellowship with God in Christ, but wal-
king in a naturall way, without imploying
of Christ, or drawing vertue from him, to
enable us unto sanctification, and preaching
in spirit and power.

In our Lives.

1. **M**uch fruitles conversing in companie, and complying
with the sins of all sorts, not behaving our selves as
becomes the men of God.

2. Great worldlinesse is to be found amongst us, mynding
and speaking most about things of this life, being busied about
many things, but forgetting the main.

3. Slighting of Gods worship in their families, and therefore
no cordiall urging of it upon others: yea, altogether a wanting
of it in some, if it be credible.

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4. Want of gravitie in carriage and apparell, dissolutnesse in hair, and shaking about the knees, lightnesse in the apparell of their wives and children,

5. Tipling and bearing companie in untymous drinking in Tavernes and Ale-houses, or any where else, whereby the Ministerie is made vile and contemptible.

6. Discourtenancing of the godly, speaking ill of them, because of some that are unanswerable to their profession.

7. The Sabbath not sanctified after Sermons, which maketh people think that the Sabbath is ended with the Sermons.

8. There are also to be found amongst us, who use small and minched oaths.

9. Some so great strangers to Scripture, that except in their publick Ministerie, though they read many things, yet they are little conversant in the Scripture, and in meditation thereof: A duene incumbent to all the people of God.

In our Callings.

1. **C**ORRUPT entrie into the Ministerie in former tymes, and following the course of defection, though forsaken, yet never seriously repented: as also present entring into the Ministerie, as to a way of living in the world, and not as to a spirituall calling.

2. Helping in, and holding in of insufficient and suspected men, who favour the things of this life, and keeping the door straiter on them whom God hath sealed, then upon these who have lesse evidence of the power of grace and holinesse.

3. Parriality in favouring, and speaking for the scandalous, whether Ministers or other persons, teaching them how to shift and delay censures.

4. Silence in the publick cause, not labouring to cure the disaffection.

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disaffection of people, nor urging them to constancie and patience, in bearing of publick burdens, nor to forwardnesse in the publick Cause; whereby Malignants are multiplied: yea, some are so grosse herein, that even in publick Fasts little or nothing is to be heard from them, sounding this way.

5. Some account it a point of wisdom to speak ambiguously: some incline to justifie the wicked cause, uttering words which savour of disaffection: and all their complaining of the tymes is in such a way, as may steal the hearts of people from lyking of good Instruments in this work, and consequently from Gods Cause; yea, some reading publick Orders, are ready to speak against them in their privat conference.

6. Idlenesse either in seldome preaching, as once on the Lords day, or in preparation for publick dueties, not being given to reading and meditation: others have but fits of paines, not like other Tradsmen continually at their work.

7. Want of zeal, and love to the conversion of souls, not being weightied with the want of successe, in reclaiming of sinners, nor searching in themselves the cause of not profiting, preaching *ex officio*, not *ex conscientia officii*.

8. Self-seeking in preaching, and a venting rather of their wit and skill, then a showing forth of the wisdom and power of God.

9. Lifelesnesse in preaching, not studying to be furnished by Christ with power: and so the ordinance of God reacheth not to the conscience; and heereto belongeth the not applying of the doctrine unto the audiorie and tymes,

10. The indiscreet curing of the indiscretion of pious people and Ministers, whereby godlinesse hath gotten a deep wound, and profanitie hath lifted up the head, contrare to that wise and gracious order set forth in the Generall Assembly holden at *Edinburgh*, 1641.

11. Little care to furnish our Armie, either abroad or at home

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home with Ministers, one of our grievous sins, and causes of our calamity.

12. Last, it is to be feared that Ministers in secret are negligent to wrestle in prayer, for a blessing to be poured out upon their labours, contenting themselves with their publick performances.

Remedies.

1. First, That Presbyteries make great conscience to have all vacant places within their severall bounds filled with godly and able men, where-ever they be to be found: and that under pretence of being a helper, or second to another, none be taken in, but such as are able for the same charge.

2. Whereas it is known, that private tryall in Presbyteries are for the most part perfunctorious, the Brethren are heereby exhorted to be more serious, and faithfull heerein, as they will be answerable to Christ, the chief Sheeph: and in a way previous thereto, that Brethren be free, in loving admonition one of another secretly, from tyme to tyme; and that whosoever keeps not the Presbyterie or Synod, after grave admonitions, may come under further censures.

3. That accuracie be used at visitation of Kirks, and that the Elders one by one (the rest being removed) be called in, to depone about the Minister, and one of them about another.

4. That courle be taken to divide Congregations in parts, and by the help not only of Elders in their severall parts, but of neighbours also, the evils, and neglects of persons and families, may be found out and remedied.

5. That every Minister be humbled for his former failings, and make his peace with God, that the more effectuellie he may preach repentance, and may stand in the gape, to turne away the

Lords

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Lords wrath : running between the Porch and the Altar, sighing and crying for all the abominations of the land.

6. Speciall care would be had, that all Ministers have their conversation in heaven, mainlie minding the things of God, and exercising faith, for drawing life out of Jesus Christ, the fountain of life, arming themselves thereby with power against the contagion and wickednesse of the world.

7. Care would be had of godly conference in Presbyteries, even in time of their refreshment, and the Moderator is to look to it, that good matter be furnished thereto.

8. It is also very necessar for every Minister that would be fruitfull in the work of the Lord, to bring home the word of the Lord to his own heart and conscience, by Prayer and Meditation, both before and after the publick ordinance.

9. Use would be made of the roll of the Parish, not onelie for examination, but also for considering the severall conditions and dispositions of the people, that accordinglie they may be admonished, and particularlie prayed for in secret.

10. It is very expedient that Ministers have more communion among themselves for their mutuall stirring up, and strengthening of their hands in the Lords work, and rectifying of these who are not incorrigible.

11. That Ministers in all sortes of companie labour to bee fruitfull, as the Salt of the earth, seasoning them they meet with, not onely forbearing to drink healths (Satans snare, leading to excessse) but reprovng it in others.

12. All Ministers would be carefull to cherish the smoaking flax of weak beginnings in the wayes of God, and bught encouragementlie to oppose all mockers and revylers of the godlie.

13. As at all times, so speciallie now when the Lord is calling us all to an account; it becomes the Ministers of Christ, with all diligence and faithfulness, to improve their Ministrie to the outmost, to be instant in season and out of season; yea, even frugallic

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frugallie to imploy their time in privar, in reading of, and meditating on Scripture, that the word of God may dwell plentifully in them.

14. That the provyding the Armies with Ministers be preferred to any congregation, and these who are appointed to attend the same, and are deficient, be without delay severelie censured; according to the Act of the Generall Assemblie, and that all Ministers not onely in publict, pray for our Armies, speciallie these that are to encounter with the bloody enemy within the land, but also continuallie bear them up before the Lord, that their lives being reformed, their heart and hands may be strengthened, and their undertaking at last blessed of G O D with successe.

15. That beside all other scandals, silence or ambiguous speaking in the publict cause, much more detraiding and disaffected speeches be seasonable censured; and to this effect, all honest hearted Brethren would firmlie unite themselves in the Lord, the younger honouring the elder, and the elder not despising the younger.

16. And finallie, both for the corruption of the Ministerie and remeed thereof; we refer the brethren to the Act of the Generall Assemblie at *Edenburgh*, 1596. revived in the late Assemblie at *Glasgow*, 1638. to bee found in the printed Act thereof.

For George Anderson Printer in Glasgow,

These are to warrand the Printing of the Letter above written, with the Articles containing the immunities, and the remedies thereof.

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GLASGOW





